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#4999-z
JOHN BRAMBLETT BEALL LETTERS

1860-1865

Folder 1 of 1

Dallas Ga.
Aug 9th. 1860

My Dear Cousin,

Disappointed as I was in not meeting you at home as I had fondly expected, I can at least have the satisfaction of writing, and indulging the hope of hearing from you. I have located permanently at this place, am boarding with Noble and Sarah.

I staid in Carroll only two weeks, and did not have an opportunity of visiting except in passing about on business. I called at your father's before I got home and was welcomed by all with manifestations of satisfaction fully equal to what their former kindness had led me to hope for. But one face I looked for in vain. My cousin Mary was not their to welcome me. How old memories crowded upon me as I walked up the yard and, entering the portico, found myself once more under the roof beneath whose shelter I had, so many years before, passed so many days of dreamy, listless satisfaction. The effect on my mind was like that which Moore ascribes to "Notes we used to love in days of childhood", "wakening thoughts that long have slept."

and performs well; but there is not that ten-
-derness and pathos in her voice which makes
our hearts bow to music as to a thing divine.

Dear Cousin, I cant write this evening. I have
the blues most unaccountably, and I know that
when I write in such a mood, my letters are
always rediculous. Write to me, and let me
know when you expect to be in Carroll, and I
will hasten to meet you there and we will
have, oh! such a big talk! and I will tell
you all I would write now but for my un-
-usual dullness.

I understand your are boarding at Mr Diamond's.
Give them all my respects.

Your Most Affectionate Cousin
Jno B Beall

P.S. As the mail does not leave till to-mor-
-row morning I kept this open intending
to add a postscript, but nothing has
occurred except that it has been raining
since Fryday and to day is Sunday,
Aug 12th 1860 — Yours. S.B.B.

To Willie
Aug 5 / 1860
Sallie

Dallas, Georgia
Aug. 9th, 1860.

My dear Cousin:

Disappointed as I was at not meeting you at home as I had fondly expected, I can at least have the satisfaction of writing and indulging the hope of hearing from you. I have located permanently at this place, and boarding with Noble and Sarah. I staid in Carroll only two weeks and did not have an opportunity of visiting except in passing about on business. I called at your father's before I got home and was welcomed by all with manifestations of satisfaction fully equal to what their former kindness had led me to hope for. But one face I looked for in vain - my Cousin Mary was not there to welcome me. How old memories crowded upon me as I walked up the yard and, entering the portico, found myself once more under the roof beneath whose shelter I had, so many years before, passed so many days of dreamy, listless satisfaction. The effect on my mind was like that which Moore ascribes to "Notes we used to love in days of childhood", Wwakening thoughts that long have slept."

I called at Mr. Garrison's. Miss Sarah sang some old favorites for me. She sings prettily and performs well; but there is not that tenderness and pathos in her voice which makes our hearts to bow to music as to a thing divine.

Dear Cousin, I can't write this evening. I have the blues most unaccountably, and I know that when I write in such a mood, my letters are always rediculous. Write to me and let me know when you expect to be in Carroll, and I will hasten to meet you there and we will have, oh! such a big talk! and I will tell you all I would write now but for my unusual dullness.

I understand you are boarding at Mr. Diamond's. Give them all my respects.

Your Most Affectionate Cousin

Jno. B. Beall

P.S. - As the mail does not leave until tomorrow morning, I kept this open intending to add a postscript, but nothing has occurred except that it has been raining since Friday and today is Sunday, August 12, 1860.- Yours, J.B.B.

To- Miss Mary Jane Merrell (mother, from Dad)
envelope lost, so do not know place addressed-B

Dallas Ga May 17th 1861

Darling:

I want very much to be with you this evening, but I am in that sort of mood in which I do not have much to talk about — when my mind is busy with a thousand things that do not assume forms to be expressed by words; let me forewarn you then not to expect any thing of literary merit in whatever I may write this evening. There! I've committed a prodigious blunder already. As if there were any danger of your expecting "any thing of literary merit" from me! Now wont my Darling call me an egotist? I have some news for you. We organized our company "The Cotton Guards" — yesterday — 77 on the roll, but only 48 present. There was no opposition for the offices in the Election. Captain J's Company is to receive a flag and a dinner (especially the dinner) at this place tomorrow, and are to start off Tuesday. The prospect of getting my company into the service is at this time unfavorable — potentia remotissima — a most improbable possibility. My dearest Mary must not give herself unnecessary trouble on that point. Still I hope you will remember that it is my wish for you to be reconciled to my going if it should ever come to be necessary. — Enough on that subject. Noble and family are well, and this next line fills out the first page of my letter, dont it?

18th Every body and his wife have been to town to day. Capt Jenkins's and [illegible] Co rec'd a beautiful flag and a [illegible] bible, presented by the Ladies – Heaven bless them, they are ever mindful of the dearest interests of men – Eloquent speeches were made. The presentation of the Bible was the most becoming thing. It was made by the Rev. J. R. [illegible] in a very feeling manner. My conscience or something says that it will be a sort of boasting to tell how it affected me. But it was all so different from the way I went off, when there was no presentation and no one cared. I had left the threshold where those were [illegible] dearest to me in this world gave the evidence of their anguish in tears, [illegible] to care at all – this scene today was so different from all that, and the words of the kind young minister were so well calculated to touch the heart of any soldier who is prepared by having experienced the privations of army life, to appreciate such demonstrations of sympathy, that the tears would come up and stand in my eyes, and I could barely refrain from blubbering out right in the crowd. After the other company had dispersed I paraded a portion of mine, drilled awhile, and got 6 more members, which, with the 48 present at the election makes 54.

The day is waning and I have come down to my room to get out of the crowd and rest. I often hear men say they would volunteer if it were not for leaving the wife, and I always think

Page(s)

Missing

Dallas, Ga., May 17, 1861.

Darling:

I want very much to be with you this evening, but I am in that sort of mood in which I do not have much to talk about - when my mind is busy with a thousand things that do not assume form to be expressed by words; let me forewarn you then not to expect anything anything of literary merit in whatever I may write this evening. There! I've committed a prodigious blunder already. As if there were any danger of your expecting "anything of literary merit" from me! Now won't my Darling call me an egotist?

I have some news for you. We organized our company - "The Cotton Guards" - yesterday. 57 on the roll, but only 48 present. There was no opposition for the offices in the election. Captain J's company is to receive a flag and a dinner (especially the dinner) at this place tomorrow, and are to start off Tuesday. The prospect of getting my company into the service is at this time unfavorable - potentia remotisima - a most improbable possibility. My dearest Mary must not give herself unnecessary trouble on that point. Still, I hope you will remember that it is my wish for you to be reconciled to my going if it should ever come to be necessary. Enough on that subject.

Noble and family are well, and this next line fills out the first page of my letter, doesn't it.

18th - Everybody and his wife have been to town today. Captain Jenkins and his Co. received a beautiful flag and a fine bible, presented by the Ladies, Heaven bless them. They are ever-mindful of the dearest interests of men. Eloquent speeches were made. The presentation of the Bible was the most touching thing. It was done by the Rev. J. R. Owen in a very felicitous manner. My consciences, or something else, hint that it will be a sort of boasting to tell how it affected me. But it was all so different from the way I went off - when there was no public demonstration, and no one, after I had left the threshold where those who were dearest to me in this world gave the evidence of their anguish in tears, seemed to care at all,- this scene today was so different from all that, and the words of the kind young Minister so well calculated to touch the heart of any soldier who is prepared by having experienced the privations of army life, to appreciate such demonstrations of sympathy, that the tears would come up and stand in my eyes, and I could barely refrain from blubbering out right in the crowd. After the other Company had dispersed I paraded a portion of mine, drilled a while and got 6 new members, which, with the 48 present at the election, makes 54.

The day is waning, and I have come down to my room to get out of the crowd and rest. I often hear men say they would volunteer if it were not for leaving a wife, and I always think. . . . . .

Balance of letter evidently lost
Envelope addressed to: Mary J. Merrell,
with date May 17,1861 Carrollton, Ga.
No stamp - orange colored envelope

with later

"8"

Camp McDonald June 30th
1861

My Darling Mary,

Heigh-ho! I'm tired and sad & lonely in the great crowd and amid the din & bustle of the camp. My position is one of more responsibility & heavier care than any one not acquainted with it can understand and, but for the consciousness that I am engaged in a great and noble purpose, I would shrink from it. From my very soul I long for repose, & the tender & loving sympathies that are only found at home. I would be like one of those so beautifully described in Gray's Elegy: "Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray,
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way".
But you, my own dear Mary, already

-know my antipathy to any thing like strife and the countless vexations that are incident to any public position; and you, more than any one else can appreciate the sacrifice I make in again taking up the sword which I hoped I had laid aside forever. "God bless you, my darling), the hopes that you have kindled in my breast have thrown a broad flood of light across my gloomy way, that erst made life look brighter & the green Earth more beautiful, & Heaven more near, and the soil of my birth more dear. But as "all that's bright must fade," so our hopes that are dearest, fall like the leaves of Autumn, & the memories that sweep across our minds in after years, are like the winds of winter that barely shake the branches of the leafless tree. Thus, while I had hoped ere long to share with you every

hope, joy, & care of life, see what different chances in the strange lottery of life we are about to draw. I can not better express it than to use words addressed to another, years ago, but with far less feeling than I use them now.

"Tis thine amid the quiet scenes of home to live,
Thine every gloom around thee to dispel;
Tis mine along ambition's paths to strive,
I go from all I love, farewell! Farewell!

— Mr. M C Awtrey, came just as I finished the above, and then some of our friends from Paulding, which has prevented me from writing a full letter as I intended. You understand my situation and, I know you will pardon & sympathise with me. I wrote to you some days ago – the very first chance I had – and hope I to get an answer to day, as my

letter by due course of mail ought to have reached you Friday morning & the mail returns Saturday. But I conclude that you had no chance to write before going home friday & then no chance to send it back in time for saturday's mail. It made me feel sick at heart today when John came from the Office & said "no letters". I feel so much alone here. There are so many to mark any error that I may fall into & none to sympathise. Cousin John Merrell is in my company Temporarily. He occupies my tent, & reminds me constantly of Joe So much so that I have several times unconsciously called him by that name, & then I remember with a pang of sorrow, the loved, yes, dearly loved companion of my first experience of Army life. Good by Darling. God in Heaven bless & fill your young heart with gladness & Peace. Your
Devoted John

Camp McDonald July 28th 1861

My Darling

Last night, just as I was about to lay my head on the pillow, filled with contemplations associated with the glorious sentiments of Grey's Elegy in contrast to the spirit of ambition & vanity which I believe to be the prime cause of this war, which is bringing desolation upon the hearts of so many thousands of the human family, a package was handed me upon which I recognised the writing of your own dear hand. It had been so long since I got a letter that it seemed like something almost too good for me. The several notes of the 10th, 16th & 26th were all full of interest. But that of the 10th, so replete with terms of endearment

[2]

and assurances of love, fills my heart with a gladness and gratitude that language is too poor to express. I wish I were with you this pleasant Sunday evening, my darling; we ~~ta~~ would talk about _that_ visit to Love Spring and live it over again with wakening memories of soul-thrilling pleasure. How I was almost afraid to kiss my _Cousin_ Mary; how kind I thought she was to seem pleased all the time with my "rude, unvarnished" conversation. and how I thought no wonder everyone who knows her, speaks her praise; and she would make such a sweet little wife, **just** the one **to cheer** a body in moments of despondence with her sweet smile, and her low sweet voice raised in strains of soothing, Heavenly harmony. And then I wondered if she loved any body; if ~~the~~ the sweet, mysterious emotion had

ever agitated her snowy bosom!
How I noted that bosom's rise and
fall and thought 'twould be a Heav-
-en on earth to know that such
an one beat alone for me!

Well that the happiest day as well
as the saddest must close & so
did that, & you remember I was sick,
and you came in next morning to
ask how I was — so kindly — when
I took your hand what an impulse
I felt, as you stood by me with your dear eyes so full of sympathy, to press you down close to
my heart, — but I could not there.

Yes Darling, that was a pleasant
visit. I dont know what made you
love me, Darling; it seems like
if you didn't, nobody ever would.
It dont seem like there is any other
woman in all the world that could
love me. Rude and unpolished as
I am, either excessively careless & blunt
in my manners, or painfully serious
and austere, There are few women
that could ever understand me, or

[4] would think it worth their while to try to cultivate my acquaintance.

To me, nobody is like my Mary, and it seems like it was always that way, — so natural — as if we had came into the world for each other, You to bless me with your love, and I to be made happy through that blessing. It occurred to me last night while I was thinking about you and my sister Mary, whom I have not seen since 1855, that maybe I can get leave of absence long enough to go up to see her, and that you could go with me. It is about a 12 hours ride from here. We could go up one day, stay there two, come back the fourth to Acworth, I could go with you to Dallas and get back here on the fifth, so that, with five days leave we could make the trip. Can you get any way to come to Acworth this week? McAwbrey would take pleasure in bringing you down

[28 July 1861/5]

from there, & there are always some ladies here. We give up one or two tents to them all the time. Or you can come down & return to Acworth, and while you are there I can seize upon any favorable moment or chance to apply for leave, and if successful we can start right on. I have no idea I could get leave long enough to go to Carroll & Tenn both, but I must see my Mary if I can get leave at all and it would be so satisfactory to have her with me two or three days, and to carry her to see my loved sister, that I can not willingly give up the idea. Dont Cousin Wm want to see our encampment? Ask him to bring you up & come prepared to go with me, do, please, Darling!

[6] Wont it be glorious? There is no certainty about the time of our leaving here. There is to be a great review & drill wednesday, of the forces here. Maybe you'll be here. I wish you could, to see me in the dust and dirt. But from the account you give of Henry's report of my reputation here, I could not hope that your estimation of my military qualifications would be hightened by seeing me on trial. I was much gratified to learn that my friends had no reason to be ashamed of my standing. But I was most pleased to hear that George was recovering. Uncle Sams family seem to have a most trying time. I got a letter the other day from James. You may perhaps remember that I once offered to bet him a pair of lady's shoes that I would be married first & he declined.

Well, he offers now to take the bet! His Mattie has yielded at last in spite of the opposition of her parents, & they have set a time away in the fall. Must I take the bet (Darling)? If I could any chance to spy you sitting in a carriage or buggy on the field (the Champus Mars of Camp McDonald) next Wednesday, wouldn't it make my heart leap! I do so much want to see you, to talk to you, to press your little hand, and enjoy a feast of love — looking into those sweet eyes where I have never looked in vain for sympathy. Oh if I did but have a week or two, or but a few days to pass with you it would be almost equal, aye more than equal to months under ordinary circumstances; — I long to tell you how much I long to live for you, while I

[8]

go freely to risk all for my country; to assure you that no ambition or mere desire of distinctinction moves me now or could actuate me to give up the fond anticipations so recently indulged; and I want to promise you that I will try to meet you in the Haven of eternal rest if we should meet no more among the scenes of time. If it could have been so I feel that it would be a source of gratification to me to know that, if I fall, my Darling would bear my name. I am full of hope that I shall return to you and happiness; but it would be unreasonable to forget that I have no better chance than ~~then~~ had the hundreds who have fallen, and

"Tis this adds bitterness to death, to die
~~To die~~ And leave no "name" for future years to bless";

~~Save what is~~ — It is after taps, I have written with many interruptions. Pardon the incoherence of my sentences. Letters reach here by mail on the day after leaving Carrollton. If you can't come at once, write immediately.

God bless you, My Mary, you are always in the tenderest, most loving thoughts of your John

[illegible] [illegible] 1st [illegible]

Darling,

In such matters as I can most conveniently [illegible] of my oppor-tunity to communicate with you, well knowing that your loving heart will be joyous upon the reception of a letter. I did not write sooner than the usual interval between my letters, wishing to hear from you before writing again. I expected a letter by Thursday's mail, but it did not come, and I looked for it confidently on Saturday, but the life of a soldier is uncertain. On Saturday morning we broke up our camp & marched from this place. We arrived here this evening. I am seated now by a camp fire, pretty warm and cosy, with me [illegible] but the [illegible], with such a light as a lantern could afford in a slight breeze. We were compelled to leave behind a part of our baggage for want of transportation & will have to be [illegible] with [illegible].

The army of the Potomac is taking up a new position, the main points of which are (Centreville & Fredericksburg). It is reported that

our rear guard under Brig. Gen. Stuart, had a fight with the van-guard of the Enemy near Emmitsburg and inflicted a terrible blow upon them. We have just heard of the doings of our [illegible] under [illegible] in Pennsylvania among the Dutch-[illegible]. [illegible] have [illegible] time of writing [illegible] to write more at length, [illegible]. Please accept the will, and dismiss [illegible] that any heart [illegible] & would [illegible] all [illegible] of [illegible] that [illegible] Jerusalem [illegible] I stood the march well, but had one of those distracting headaches on the second day and night, in consequence, I presume, of the sudden interruption of my habits (in eating & sleeping). Many poor fellows gave out by the way, and I was glad to be able to carry a gun [illegible] for some who seemed about to give up. I have [illegible] you have been [illegible] me. May Heaven bless you, and grant that my dream of a few nights ago may be realised in a happy reunion a no distant day. Direct to Frederick, [illegible]. Once again God bless you, my own dearest!

Your devoted [illegible]

2/ Camp Barton
near Fredericksburg Va
Mar. 26" 1862

Darling,

At last we have received a mail & I have once more enjoyed the dear pleasure of reading sweet missives of love from the hand & the heart of my darling. I sit down at a late hour to write that I may avail myself of an opportunity which now presents itself, of sending letters by hand. And I am prompted to write thus soon again (I started a letter only day before yesterday by Cousin D.C.) because there is reason to expect that a move of our regmt. will prevent me from doing so for some time hereafter. Your letters were read with more than usual interest, if possible, - one of the 2d & one of the 16" Inst. I hope now that I shall soon get a reply to my note, in pencil, of the day of our arrival here. I was glad, very glad, my love, to hear that you were well, and looking forward to a glorious reunion hereafter, if not in this world at least beyond the tomb. I don't know

why it should be so, with all the perils of this war before me; but I do entertain an almost unfaltering hope that we shall meet again, my dear Mary, in this world. God grant it may be so. If I thought we should not, I could only wish to live to exert my feeble strength in defence of my country, and I would pray Heaven to let me be revenged upon our enemies for depriving me of so much happiness.

I was very glad to hear of cousin H's convalescence, for I had heard that he was dangerously ill. Cousin John is very well. I would like very much to have George with me. Capt Cunliff, my most intimate associate, having been promoted is gone now to his new regmt, & I feel quite alone here. Lt. Ec. has not yet returned.

I knew that mother & Martha would be sorry about my losing the coat but, I thought it so little among the other consequences of the war that they would soon get over it. And you are distressing your little self about "that old comfort", which, if I get, I mean to keep through the war and after

if I can. I don't think the war can last much longer. The struggle is rapidly approaching a crisis. The federals must conquer or fail soon. Procrastination would ruin them. They can not conquer us. It is true that by beating us in one or more pitched battles they might be able carry on the war a great while yet – a year or more. Their only chance to do this is North Ga. Two months will determine whether the war is to be a very long one. If they do not defeat us at some important point in that – some point occupied by one of the main divisions of our army, they will never do it.

May God bless you, Darling, and reward you for your loving kindness.

Let me answer your little verses in plain prose.

I want a little hand to hold within my own; I want a little head to lean upon my breast – a loving heart which, pressed against my own, for every throb an answering pulse will give; an eye to brighten when

my step is heard; I want a soft warm cheek to lay my lips upon; and when the day is gone and the still shades of evening creep over the earth, and I long to shut out the world and its cares, then I want a home and a companion whose love would make that home a Paradise, — I want — God bless you, Darling! you are all I want. How I do love you! How happy I would make you! Will fate ever impel me from what I hold dearer than life? When we think of life as we would have it & then as it is, how sad the contrast. But come what may, I am yours, Mary, all yours, and I would not dream of happiness, if you could not be in the scene. Adieu!

Your Lover.

Direct to Richmond. Tell George to come & bring me as many recruits as he can get. I have only sixty five men.

Camp Near Ashland Va.
April 11" 1862

My Dear Carrie,

I am so much averse to writing the unpleasant details of life in camp or bivouac and there is so little of a pleasant nature to communicate that I begin writing undetermined whether to enter into a relation of our movements since my last, by which I could at least make out a letter respectable enough in length, or, on the other hand, inform you in as few words as possible of the real change in my own condition and the situation of our division, and conclude by a cursory glance at affairs generally, deducing therefrom such hopeful views as the facts may seem to justify. The latter course suits my convenience the better and has the additional recommendation of promising brevity.

We left Camp Bartow (Fredericksburg) on the morning of the 8", marched to Milford Station, took the train and arrived here, without baggage about 12 last night. Ashland is a small village 16 miles north of Rich-

-mond. Our position is favorable for rein-
-forcing the army of the Peninsula, the forces
about Norfolk, the coast of North Carolina
or those in western Va. The Enemy's designs
are not yet fully developed but it is believed
that he aims to strike us in the Peninsula
(the neck of land between the Rappahannock &
James Rivers, where our forces are under
McGruder) If so we have such facilities
for reinforcing our lines there that un-
-less causes intervene that, with my lim-
-ited means of information, I am unable
to foresee, we must defeat him.
In the valley of the Mississippi, affairs are
more hopeful. The fact that our army,
jaded as it was by ten hours fighting
the day before, which resulted in the to-
-tal defeat of an army nearly, if not quite,
of equal numbers, engaged a superior force
of fresh troops, on monday, fought them
seven hours & withdrew from the field
in perfect order, the enemy fearing to
follow up his advantage, is sufficient
to justify the belief that, with the rein-
-forcements which Beauregard will
be able to bring upon the field, our army

will gain another glorious victory there. But while I write the curtain may have been already raised, and while I do not fear the result I am anxious very anxious to know what has occurred. It is impossible for any one out of the pale of the leading councils of the army to arrive at any accurate conclusion as to its future move-ments, for those movements must be dictated by facts unknown to the public. Should we be compelled to withdraw from the Peninsula, either with or without a battle, the evacuation of Norfolk &c would then be a military necessity. But the enemy would then be compelled to come into the interior and, finally, to fight us in some position of our own choosing, in which case his defeat would be inevitable, and a defeat under such circumstances would be ruin-ous to him. Under no circumstances must we be discouraged.

Oh, mon joli, cher Marie! What floods of light break in upon me, when I think of possibility - almost a probability of the war's be-ing brought to a close in a short time by two great victories - on the Peninsula and in

the valley of the gathering waters! Apr 11-62

God grant that it may be so! We shall know ere long, possibly before this reaches you. — While I was writing the last line a tremendous cheering was heard in the brigade next to ours. A few minutes later, our regiment was drawn up to hear the announcement that a member of Genl Smith's Staff had rec'd from a member of Congress, a telegram to this effect; Beauregard had met Buell defeated his army & routed it & the latter had fallen. While this news is in such questionable shape as not to justify exultation, it is just such news as I expected to hear & I have no positive doubt of its truth, but shall anxiously await more definite information. If the victory is ours the praise is due to Him who rules our destinies. I read today a dispatch stating that enemy commenced bombarding Fort Pulaski yesterday morning & continued it furiously all day. We can afford to lose that if they can take it. I have written this on my knee. Our baggage has not yet come up; we have neither tents nor cooking utensils, but we are get used to the bivouac. I would like to have my blanket & a change of clothing. It will come tomorrow. Our skies are brightening. Be of good cheer. I rec'd both your letters about the school &c. I would have written sooner but for having written just before getting the last, by Mr Geo Smith, and for this sudden & unexpected movement. With a soul full of love, Your devoted

John

Near Richmond May 25" /62

My Own Dear Mary,

I have just had the satisfaction of reading your kind letter ending May 16". I rec'd the one directed to Yorktown some time ago and answered it. I have been expecting a letter some days and intended to write today anyhow, partly to acknowledge the rec'pt of your very nice and most useful gifts, Mr C having returned to Camp & rec'd his trunk. How could my dear girl be so troubled about that "old comfort", as you were pleased to call it? I think it a very nice one, and the [illegible] of red at the end do not mar it at all. The towels & handkerchiefs — a treasure — & you were kind enough to mark them too. Whenever I see

Please always put No of Regiment & State: thus 17" Ga. Vols.

them I will think of your busy lit-
-tle hands and want to kiss you.
I see that you have some diffi-
-culty in getting envelopes as well
as paper. Your last, for instance,
being an old one turned, as I see in
side the name of "John B. Beall Esq
Dallas Ga." I do wish I could
send you some. I had bou[ght]
a lot of paper to send in my
[illegible], when I went to the express
office to put it in, I could'nt get to
see the agent & so I carried it back
to Camp. Oh you were so sad
when you wrote! Darling, I wish
I could shield you from the very shadow of
grief. I dont know how it was
that you got no letter for so long, only
it was at the time I directed one to
Carrollton. It may have hap-
-pened, however, from my waiting to

hear from you; for, as I have written heretofore, it seemed a long, long interval between the arrival of your letters of the 11" April & the 5" of May. Perhaps while waiting for the last I [illegible] an unusual time to slip by without writing. If so, pardon me, my dear [illegible]; I am unworthy of so much solicitude.
I know, my own Darling, that your generous heart, all pure & without a thought of self, as it is, would prompt you to be willing to share any of the hardships entailed upon us by this war; but may be it is not quite so bad as you have been led to believe. Sometimes we do get short of rations & men get hungry, but never starving, or near it. Sometimes men are sick & yet have to drag themselves along through mud & rain, until they are exhausted. but this happens only in cases of emer

gen-
-cy, like that of the retreat from York-
-town. Be assured, my darling girl,
that so long as an over-ruling Providence
blesses us with, for the sake of those for
whom we fight, we can bear cheerfully
all the hardships incident to the war. It
does seem to me that my heart would
be comparatively as light as a feather, if there
were no sickness in the army. Pray God
to save our soldiers from the fearful rav-
-ages of disease, by which far more have
fallen than by the sword. _ It is expected that a
great battle will be fought soon in this vicinity. We
marched out yesterday evening expecting to
meet the enemy, leaving every thing but our arms,
but came back after dark, having waded
a creek twice & a good deal of mud to no
purpose. It is generally understood that
the authorities have determined to hold this
city. If they do, the fight can not be long put
off. There has been a good deal of artillery du-
-elling between the out-posts for two or
three days. We have our rations cooked &
all ready. Dear Mary, I have no forebo-
-ding of evil. My faith in our success is unfal-
-tering, and I believe I shall be permitted
to return to you and enjoy those blissful en-
-dearments of love for which I so ardently long.
If I come not, know that your adored name with my
last breath, shall be linked in blessings with that of my
mother. Your own John.

May 25 1862

Richmond Va
Nov 6 1863

My Wife!

I love to dwell on that endearing appellation. No descriptive adjective can make the word more expressive. My Wife: her whom I have chosen from among women to be my companion in all the vicissitudes of life; to go with me and to be mine. my own, my darling, all along the weary journey in joy or in sorrow [illegible] until death us part. I can give no stronger assurance of my love, for there are many, and I have chosen thee. Happy choice! I bless God who gave thee to me, & pray that I may be to thee a good husband, as I know I shall ever be a loving one. I got your letter this evening. I wish you could know [illegible] what you [illegible] without feeling [illegible] how [illegible] poured consolation into my heart [illegible]. I was returning to my room with a mind full of most bitter reflections, had past the post office, was meditating resignation with expressions of my indignation [illegible] thought of taking the first train home, to bury myself with you and happiness far from the exasperating disappointments incident to public life; then I thought of the post office, went back & your

sweet missive was handed to me. I found it open, which gave me a momentary flush of displeasure; for sentiments so sacred are not fit for any disinterested eye; but upon examining the envelope I was satisfied that it was entirely the fault of the mailing. I have not noticed the date. I have not noticed the date of your letter though I have read it twice, I was so gratified by its contents. You have been, you say very happy, Mary, my dear Mary, I have been supremely blessed; for your happiness has been the end of all my most earnest wishes. To me, since our paths met & became one, life has been a sweet & pleasant dream, interrupted only by your late suffering, and sorrowful accident. But we will, by God's blessings of our love, be happier yet. Let us constantly strive to expect less of each other & to contribute more to each other's happiness, each of us believing with an unalterable trust, as I do believe, that the dearest, most constant wish in the heart of each, is the other's happiness. Let no trifles come between us. There is no bliss but in harmony. If we should unfortunately fail of happiness here & of preparation for it hereafter, our existence would be a failure. But we shall not fail. Our love is too deep rooted ever to be shaken. Self denial may, and doubtless will sometimes be necessary in each to secure the greater blessings that result from perfect harmony. But if we ever seek

to walk humbly before the Lord, that humility will teach us patience, & patience work with self-denial.

I would that I were endowed with wisdom to lead you my darling, among pleasant paths all the days of your life. I bless you from my heart for the confidence you have given me, manifested by your loving com-pliance with my slightest wishes as well as by your forsaking all others and giving yourself to me.

The Apostle when he says "wives, submit yourselves to your husbands" doubtless has a view to the preserva-tion of harmony in reference to that instinct, implanted in the breast of every man, which prompts him to assume the government of his household. What a weighty respon-sibility this assumption involves, & how terrible the retribution that awaits him who dares in the light of civilization and revelation to abuse it!

I met Sergt Johnson on the cars at Palmetto & we came on together. Both trains once, ran off the track twice, missed connection three times & ar-rived here at last Wednesday evening. I saw Mr Carlton. His wife was sick, seemed to be taking the fever. Traveled with Miss Kate Asbury to Covington. Met Bro Thomas in Augusta & spent half an hour with him.

Mr Cantrell went with me this morning to the War office. The Secretary said that there were so many applications of the sort that he couldn't consider them. They must be made in the regular way.

I shall go up to the Regiment tomorrow & return on

$100

Manning S.C. Apl. 12" 1863

My Darling Mary

You may not expect another letter so soon, but Not being satisfied with the hurried manner in which the failure of my candles compelled me to break off my last, I propose to pass a portion of this very quiet and pleasant sabbath evening in writing to you. (I arrived here yesterday ~~eve-~~ morning and took board at a Mr. Kelly's, a member of the baptist church and farmer, at $1.00 per day. which I consider extremely cheap for the times. Provisions are much more plentiful here than in our part of Ga., Corn being abundant at about 1.75 I have secured the use of an office without cost, on the court square, and about 1/2 mile from my lodgings. I presume you will not find Manning on the maps, as it is a place of only 6 years stand-ing. It is probababely 70 miles southeast of Colum-bia, and 20 south from Sumterville on the Wil-mington and Manchester Railroad.

Quite a funny thing happened to me this morning. Mr. Kelly asks me for the time. Looking at my watch I answered 8 minutes to eleven. Well its time we we were going to church said he, and to church we started. "Your time is faster than ours" re marked Mr. K. as we proceeded. ~~A~~ "I have the col-

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-lumbia time" I replied. "Ah we're a lazy set here" observed Mr Gallichat, (pro-shaw) who accompa-nied us, and who seems as anxious to agree with me in every thing as if he had some great favor to ask. I thought the morning had passed off with remarkable rapidity, & remembering that I had moved the regulator of my watch to make it run fas-ter, wondered if it had gained & hour or two. As Mr. Kelly commenced ringing the church-bell to assemble the laggard congregation, Ourselves be-ing the first arrival except one boy, I glanced at my watch; - the hands marked 12 minutes after 9!
The discourse was from John 1-42. The minister took occasion from this text, to admonish his congrega-tion in a most earnest manner, of their duties to labor and watch for the spiritual welfare of those to whom they are bound by the ties of nature, such re-lationship ever carrying with it more or less influence "No prayer", said he, "ever ascended to Heaven without bringing back a blessing - if not upon him for whom it ascended, at least upon him who uttered it". If such is really the case we have a double inducement to pray for those we love.
I believe you have read Grace Truman. Let me present you a passage from that admirable work - one which you may have passed over lightly, as we

are so apt to do even the most striking sentences. when deeply interested in the course of the narrative.

"Yes, I am sometimes sad; I sometimes feel that the best, most earnest desires of my soul, are not to be met here— that there must be something in the far-off future which will answer *all* hope, *all* expectation. But *I will not give my-self unhappiness because I do not possess it now*, but will patiently await its coming." Thus a holy aspiration for that transcendant happiness, which we conceive awaits the christian when the cares of this life are over, is not inconsistent with— but, on the contrary should be conducive to a grateful contentment and resignation to those cares. "I believe", says Mrs Ford, "God has im-planted those desires in our bosom, and for a wise purpose. He does not intend that we shall be fully happy here, lest we forget, while in the midst of enjoyment, to lay up for ourselves treasures above; and it is not until we shall enter upon the possession of those treasures, that we will feel to have nothing more to desire,— nothing more to hope for. ----- and I think disappointments are given us that we may the more readily and the more earnestly perform this work" (Page 86-7)

13th Well Darling the day of rest is past, and the business cares of the week, are upon me. I thought I would have nothing to do to day, but since I commenced writing five men have reported & I have considered their cases.

Manning S.C. Apl 12/63
4 - Literary

I am getting very anxious to hear from you, but cannot hope to do so before next monday. The time will be heavy on my hands. I hope you are well and will keep so- So much of our happiness depends on your health, Darling, you will be very careful to preserve it, I trust. When you write inform me especially about your health.

I shall be anxious about Amelia and Bro Martin & Noble until I hear from them.

My own health is better than when I left home and that painful depression of mind, which I observed with sorrow brought sadness to your own dear loving heart, God bless you, has left me. As I said in my letter from Richmond, I would to God I were endowed with wisdom from on high, to lead you ever in flowery paths. God knows my dearest wish is to see you happy. But the frailties inseperable from our mortality render all worldly happiness transient and imperfect. But we have been very, very happy any how; and, by Gods blessing we will be more so. If, my dear Mary, I have not always seemed to regard with sufficient tenderness the delicate organisation of your mind and heart, which, like the sensitive plant, shrinks from the slightest touch, it is because I have not had yet a perfect understanding of its nature, and I know your kind heart has always readily forgiven me. Give my love to all.

And now, dear Jenny, Good bye- I send a kiss and blessing-

Your loving husband.
Jno B. Beall

Camp [illegible] [illegible]

December 25th 1864

Darling:

I wrote you two days ago, but being idle this morning and having no book to engage my mind and draw it away from sad, homesick thoughts of home and you, and our darling little boy, I must write again. I have no premeditation of what I shall write. I think & feel so much, my brain is so full of fancies about my precious treasures, and my power of expression is so contracted, that my best efforts seem lame and impotent when measured by the standard of my heart's affections. If my last letter commenced like a sermon, this one, you will say, has the introduction of a love letter. Well, a love letter let it be. You will not suppose, my Darling, that I am in any danger of faltering in the discharge of my duty, when I tell you that there are times when I am scarce conscious of the feelings of abhorrence to the scenes around me, that swell up in my breast when fancy reverts to hallowed associations of home, and pictures to my mind the peace, the heavenly comforts, that I might enjoy from your loved society. It were enough to render me a confirmed misanthrope, but for the culture I have been so fortunate as to receive from christian parents. Who in the midst of scenes like these, that

pauses but for a moment to dwell upon the womanly devotion of a loving and adored wife, "that sweetest part in the harmony of our being," can suppress a feeling of utter disgust, amounting almost to a curse upon the unhappy fate that exiles him from all that is dear to his heart, from peace, harmony, comfort and happiness, and thrusts him into scenes where his only consolation is that he is discharging his duty, and that his faith in the unutterable love of those he has left behind can not be banished from his heart. But this, my dear one, is a sweet consolation — one without which I could not wish to live. I feel that, however severely others may animadvert upon my conduct, in whatsoever terms I may be arraigned before the bar of a vacillating & fallacious public opinion, one heart, at least, will find some palliation for any seeming fault, one ear will be deaf to every censure, one fond breast ready to pillow my weary, weary head, — this is a blessing for which I may well thank God. You, at least will know that my efforts have been directed to no selfish or ambitious end, that nothing but a sense of duty and obligation to my fellow country-men could have torn me from your tender arms

And if I lose all else, you will still be my own sweet darling friend through life until death - & I have faith that beyond the grave we shall be united throughout eternity.

There have been several Genl orders published since we left home that have created much dissatisfaction in my command. The first was one from Genl Cobb, announcing that the organization shall be maintained for sixty days, after which those subject to conscription are to report to the proper enrolling officers, the militia men & those subject to service in the reserves to remain in the organization. The other was the Governor's late order furloughing indefinitely the reserve militia. Some of my officers claim that under this order we ought to be furloughed - & got many of the men to thinking so too, so that the dissatisfaction was naturally heightened when it was determined, as I expected, that the order did not apply to us. Under the first order it was feared that we will be kept out sixty days in front instead of remaining up the end of forty, according to the understanding when we left, and again that the men subject will be conscripted, and again, that we will be held in service for the war. The worst that I apprehend is that we shall be detained for sixty days, which will end on the 7th of February. But a thousand vague indefinable fears have risen in the minds of the men, that keep them in a feverish excitement.

[illegible] or [illegible] of dissatisfaction is the [illegible]

[illegible] my information of [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] 60 men on picket [illegible]

[illegible] & 12 on guard nightly.

[illegible] in our [illegible] nearer than [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] miles. [illegible] no papers or letters. It

was a week after the evacuation of Savannah

before we had [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] rumor [illegible] heard rumors about

[illegible] capturing [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

reports of his losing it & his army, & of the death

of the President. Doctor Town is a R.R. Station

on the Atlantic & Gulf R.R. at the Altamaha bridge

fifty miles from Savannah & 150 from Thomasville, the

western terminus of the road. I see no good reason why we can

not get letters from [illegible] in 7 days: Yet I have been from

home over 20, without a line to assure me that all is well with

those I love. — The hour for drill has arrived and I must

close, but may be I'll add a line in the morning.

25th. Still no letters. I fear the Post Masters at Albany &

Thomasville are neglecting their duty about forwarding letters

Give my love to all & forty kisses to the little ones. May

God comfort & cheer you — Your Own, Husband John B. [illegible] C.C.

Loton Lemmo Feb. 7" 1861

My Dear Mary,

Your affectionate, long expected letter of Jan. 30" reached me last evening. I had been much troubled about not getting a letter, and at one time, when Tanner & Blalock rec'd letters of the 23d through by mail in six days, or seven, and I heard nothing of your being sick, some evil spirit whispered in my ear that you might have forgotten my injunction to write twice a week; reminding me (by way of argument I suppose) that after writing on the 8", my Darling had not written again 'til the 18". I had some difficulty in banishing this meddlesome spirit (which on other occasions has given me no little disquietude in other relationships) by recollecting that you had despaired of getting a letter to me by mail & awaited for the departure of Capt

Banner; by reflecting that the care and labor of your household - having one servant to assist you - occupied your time & in all probability wearied your mind & body to a painful degree -, that you might have written & your letter from being written with a bad pencil - which is easily erased - or from the carelessness of postmasters, or some other cause had miscarried, and, again that you or our darling boy might be sick and you were waiting for a favorable turn of the complaint, that my ~~feelings~~ anxiety might not be harrassed with greater anxiety than already oppressed it - and so the evil spirit, banished by love, went off ashamed, like one detected in a mean attempt to injure another in the estimation of a friend. And thus shall Love, the sweet little God, ever stand sentinel at the portals of my heart to forbid the entrance there of any

unkind thought of her, my darling wife, the mother of my little cherub boy, my comforter, my home, my life, my hope for happiness - God bless her! God of my fathers, guard her from all evil! And you were sick sure enough - I am glad, very glad you were so well over it before you wrote. I fear your sickness has been caused by unavoidable exposure & hence may occur again. Oh Poverty, wilt thou ever be my tyrant, throwing thy drops of bitterness even into the sweetest cup from which I can be permitted to drink in this life! — Well, Darling you are destined to a second disappointment. No attention has been paid to my applications, none to the petition of the people at home for our return - at least I have rec'd no answer, no order, no communication to say, thou shalt or shalt not.

Feb 1865

But it is hoped that the Militia will all be furloughed at an early day, the Governor having declared his intention to do so in time for them to plant their crops and if he does that, you know, it can't be long. It would injure me very much to resign and leave my command here. So, Darling, we must wait yet a little while, that our happiness when we do meet may have nothing to embitter it, growing out of my action.

We are about discharging the boys under sixteen years of age and furloughing those over fifty. I send this by Capt. Chavers(?), who has resigned, being Judge of the Inferior Court. Give my love to Mother & Sister & the children, & to all our dear people [illegible].

Have you never read letter enclose tax recpt regarding McCurdy? Good bye, Darling. May God graciously hear your prayers.

Yours Lovingly, John B. Beal(?)